



Good Nights Sleep Aids in Job Safety and Effectiveness

TOO TIRED TO DO THE JOB RIGHT?

What effect does the sleep you got last night have on the way you do your job today? Chances are...more of an effect than you think. Many people assume that staying up a few extra hours to read or watch television is no big deal, but experts now agree that loss of sleep has detrimental effects on productivity, creativity and safety, and recent studies show that more Americans are suffering from sleep deprivation than from alcohol and drug abuse.

How much sleep is enough? Eight hours a night is the recommended minimum, but most Americans get seven hours or less. By the end of a week this can add up to an entire night of lost sleep. If you lose two hours of sleep in one night, you can expect a significant impact the next day, as much as a 20% drop in memory, a 30% loss in the ability to communicate effectively, a 75% drop in the ability to pay attention and a 50% decrease in judgment and decision making skills.

Some workers are more prone to sleep loss: night workers, shift workers, workers who cross time zones and workers with long work days. Unfortunately, as more and more companies try to find ways to improve productivity, more night shifts, swing shifts and long shifts are being added.

If you're sleeping less than the recommended eight hours per night, try to get more. Follow these suggestions for getting the most out of the sleep you do get::

- ❑ Keeping your bedroom quiet, dark and cool will aid sleep; a drop in core body temperature is a cue for your body's sleep response.

- ❑ If you work nights or shifts, sleep during the day may be your only option. Use thick curtains or shades to block out as much sunlight as possible.
- ❑ Use a fan or some other "white noise" generator to block out noises that may keep you awake or disturb your sleep.
- ❑ Use your bedroom for sleeping; not for television viewing or as a home office.
- ❑ Avoid taking caffeine within five hours of going to bed.
- ❑ Comfort foods, such as warm milk, can help induce sleep.
- ❑ Avoid alcohol at bedtime. While alcohol can make you sleepy, it can also interfere with the deep sleep that your body needs to feel fully rested.

While these suggestions can help your nighttime sleep, you can also increase your alertness by napping. Studies have shown repeatedly that short 20-minute naps can greatly improve productivity.

Remember, that safety is everyone's responsibility and only you can make your workplace safe

QUESTIONS?

Call your supervisor or Tom Vogel in the Sacramento office

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